

VZCZCXYZ2822  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBP #0239/01 0661421  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 061421Z MAR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8850  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 0381  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 000239

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [ML](#)  
SUBJECT: TRIBAL FAULT LINES WITHIN THE TUAREG OF NORTHERN  
MALI

REF: 07 BAMAKO 00994

Classified By: Political Officer Aaron Sampson, Embassy Bamako, for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1.(C) Summary: Divisions within the Malian Tuareg rebel Alliance for Democracy and Change (ADC) and the emergence of the Mali-Niger Tuareg Alliance (MNTA) led by Ibrahim ag Bahanga have highlighted internal differences between Tuareg groups in northern Mali. This cable attempts to lay out the tribal sub-divisions of Malian Tuaregs and identify key leaders within various tribes and fractions. A similar cable on northern Mali's Arab communities will follow septel. This breakdown of Tuareg hierarchies is not intended to serve as a definitive tool for predicting the tendencies of individual decision-makers or entire Tuareg tribes or fractions, but may help evaluate possible outcomes. Each actor and group's place within these hierarchies is just one of many variables influencing decisions and local political developments. The divisions outlined below were well known by the French during the colonial era. Colonial French administrators and subsequent Malian governments exploited these divisions on numerous occasions, but with dubious success. While a more nuanced understanding of the structure of Mali's Tuareg community may not translate into the direct ability to shape events, it can provide a useful insight into northern Mali that will enable us to better comprehend contemporary developments and trends.

2.(C) Summary continued: An analysis of these trends though the lens developed here yields several possible scenarios for 2008 and 2009. Each of these scenarios, which are sketched in Para 22, depend on the actions of the Malian government, Algeria, and Tuareg leaders. The worst case, which could emerge as either collateral damage from a military offensive by the Malian government on Bahanga's positions or the failure to take concrete steps toward implementing the 2006 Algiers accords, could produce several "mini-Bahangas" representing different Tuareg, Arab or Songhai factions in northern Mali somewhat akin to what occurred in 1991 during the second Tuareg rebellion. The lawlessness that would accompany such a development would result in a serious deterioration of the security climate in northern Mali, likely benefiting AQIM and others in the extreme north whose operations depend on rampant insecurity. Perhaps the most important aspect of this cable, however, are the restive Tuareg youth who came of age after the rebellion of the 1990s - an issue that merits further study and attention. This cable draws on material assembled by Ibrahim ag Litney, a Tuareg from Kidal, who is the Embassy's specialist on the north. End Summary.

-----  
Malian Tuareg Hierarchies  
-----

3.(C) Malian Tuaregs are loosely divided into a three-tiered system of tribes, fractions and sub-fractions (also described variously as "clans" or "tents") differentiated by lineage and geographical region. The following is an attempt to break down the composition of Malian Tuaregs by group and by region. We have also listed some key decision-makers associated with each group. Where possible we note which individuals held leadership roles in former rebel groups from the Tuareg rebellion of the 1990s - such as the Popular Movement for the Azawad (MPA), the Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of the Azawad (ARLA) and Front for the Liberation of the Azawad (FPLA) - or current rebel groups like the ADC and MNTA. Although some fractions and sub-fractions have traditionally subservient roles, this dynamic of dominance and subservience broke down since the end of the colonial era.

-----  
Tuaregs in Kidal  
-----

4.(C) IFOGAS (or Iforas) is the tribe of the northern Mali's traditional Tuareg nobles. Ifogas have ruled over other Malian Tuaregs since the colonial era. The current Amenokal, or traditional leader of Malian Tuaregs, is an Ifogas from Kidal. Kidal Ifogas were at the center of the first Tuareg rebellion, the second Tuareg rebellion, the 2006 attacks in Menaka and Kidal, and the on-going hostage crisis in Tinzawaten. During the 1991-1996 rebellion, most Ifogas rebels belonged to the Popular Movement for the Azawad (MPA)

led by Iyad ag Ghali. According to Malian government records, there are more than 60 Tuareg fractions in the region of Kidal alone. The Kidal Ifogas tribe, however, can be subdivided into four main fractions: the Kel Affella, the Ifergoumessen, the Kel Ireyakkan, and the Kel Taghlit.

Kel Affella - this is the traditional fraction of the Amenokal and consists of 20 smaller sub-fractions and dozens of smaller groups spread throughout Tessalit, the Adrar and Tin-Essako in the region of Kidal. Kel Affella leaders include:

- Intallah ag Attaher, the current and aged Amenokal
- Alghabass ag Intallah, son of Intallah, National Assembly Deputy from Kidal
- Mohamed ag Intallah, son of Intallah, National Assembly Deputy from Tin-Essako
- Ahmada ag Bibi, ex-MPA, National Assembly Deputy from Abeibara, current ADC Spokesman
- Cheikh ag Aoussa, split with Iyad ag Ghali during 1990s rebellion, now ADC's Secretary for "Internal Relations"
- Mohamed ag Acherif, advisor without portfolio to President Amadou Toumani Toure
- Abderahmane ag Ghalla, ex-ARLA leader, current Malian diplomat based in Tamanrasset; belongs to the Iradjanaten sub-fraction traditionally under Affella dominance; ag Ghalla now autonomous due to actions during 1991-1996 rebellion

Ifergoumessen - divided into 5 sub-fractions and other groups across Edjerer, Kidal and the Tamensna region bordering Niger. The Ifergoumessen's key leaders have broken with the ADC to pursue a separate rebellion against the Malian government under the banner of the Mali-Niger Tuareg Alliance (MNTA). Ifergoumesse leaders include:

- Ibrahim ag Bahanga, ex-MPA, ex-ADC "Conflicts and Reconciliation" Officer, now leader of the MNTA
- Hassane ag Fagaga, ex-MPA, ex-ADC second in command, member of MNTA
- Hama ag Sid'ahmed, ex-MPA, ex-ADC Secretary for "External Relations," MNTA spokesman based in Paris, Bahanga's father-in-law

Kel Ireyyakkan (also called Kel Ouzeyen) - this fraction is broken into 6 sub-fractions and other groups located in Ouzeyen, Abeibara and Edjerer. Key leaders include:

- Iyad ag Ghali, ex-MPA leader, current leader of the ADC
- Elladi ag Alla, credited with starting the first Tuareg rebellion in 1963, now living in Boughessa
- Bayen ag Akhawali, former Mayor of Kidal
- Assoufah ag Alkhader, living in Abeibara
- Cheick ag Baye, Kidal Coordinator of Mali's Agency for Youth Employment (APEJ)
- Ablil ag Albacher, businessman in Kidal
- Bah Moussa, ex-MPA, ex Malian army Colonel, ADC Officer, led ADC's 23 May 2006 attack on Malian military outpost in Menaka
- Haroun Saghid, ex-MPA, ADC member, Malian army Commandant in Kidal
- Ibrahim ag Banna, ex-MPA, ADC member, Malian army Captain in Kidal

Kel Taghlit - this fraction can be divided into 10 sub-fractions located in Tahlits, Tessalit, Abeibara and Tassik. Key Kel Taghlit individuals include:

- Ghousmane ag Ahmad, Fraction Chief in Tassik
- Lamine ag Bissada, ex-MPA, Malian soldier in Kidal
- Oubrem ag Oussaghid, Fraction Chief in Abeibara
- Albakader Kabyl, living in Kidal
- Ibrahim ag Litny, currently employed by the U.S. Embassy, former spokesperson for various rebel groups in the 1990s, including ARLA, while a student in Paris.

5.(C) The TAGHAT MELET tribe is also based in the region of Kidal. The Taghat Melet can be divided into two main fractions, the Kel Telabit and the Kel Oukenek. During the Tuareg rebellion of the 1990s, many Taghat Melet broke with the Ifogas rebel leader Iyad ag Ghali to form a splinter rebel group known as the Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of the Azawad (ARLA).

Kel Oukenek - members of the Kel Oukenek are generally closer to the Ifogas largely due to matrimonial ties. They are located in the Tadjmart and Telia zones. Key leaders include:

- Attaher ag Inguida, Chief in Edjerer.
- Mahmoud ag Abag, Mayor of Essouk
- Ghissa ag Hiba, elected local government official in Kidal
- Tokhia ag Hiba, Fraction Chief in Essouk
- Hama ag Malik, elected local government official in Kidal

Kel Telabit - members of the Kel Telabit are generally closer to the Idnane (para 6) due to matrimonial ties. They are based in Telabit and Anmalen. Kel Telabit leaders include:

- Zeid ag Hamzata, failed National Assembly candidate from Kidal, Chief in Djounhan
- Abdoussalam a Assalat, ADC member, President of Kidal Chamber of Commerce
- Ada ag Massamad, ex-ARLA, ADC member, Malian soldier based in Kidal
- Abeadj ag Abdollah, representative to High Council of Territorial Collectivities from Aguelhoc
- Ahmed ag Hamzata, ex-ARLA, brother of Zied ag Hamzata, junior Malian military officer based in Kidal

6.(C) The IDNANE tribe can be divided into two fractions, the Talkast and the Taitoq. There are at least seven sub-fractions under the Talkast and Taitoq as well as several dependent groups. In 1991 most Idnane rebel fighters joined with the Taghat Melet to create ARLA and distance themselves from the Ifogas dominated MPA.

Talkast - can be found throughout the Adrar, in Tadjmart, Alket and Eghachar-Sediden. Key leaders are:

- Choghib ag Attaher, Chief in Eghachar-Sadiden

- Momahed ag Erlaf, former Malian government Minister, Director of the Malian Agency for Local Investment (ANICT)
- Eghlaf ag Cheikh, retired Malian soldier, fought for Malian government during first Tuareg rebellion in 1963
- Sidati ag Cheikh, Eghlaf ag Cheikh's brother, retired soldier in Kidal, fought on Malian side in 1963
- Matachi ag Bakrene, government administrator in Kidal
- Hamedi ag Ahmad, businessman in Kidal
- Madame Nina Walett Intallou, Kidal representative to High Council of Territorial Collectivities
- Leche ag Didi, ex-ARLA, Malian army Commandant
- Wari ag Ibrahim, ex-ARLA, National Guard Officer based in Bamako
- Al Hamdou ag Illyen, Governor of Kidal; considered an Idane Talkast through his mother, which is somewhat unusual for a patrilineal society. Illyen's father is unknown but believed to have been either Songhrai or a black Tamachek/Bella.

Taitoq - located in region of Adagh Timtaghen, Tinkar and the Telemse valley. Key leaders include:

- Deyti ag Sidimou, ADC "Finance Secretary," National Assembly Deputy from Tessalit
- Baye Diknene, transporter in Tinkar
- Eghless ag Oufene, works for UN agricultural development project (FIDA) in Kidal
- Attaher ag Sidilamine, businessman in Kidal
- Najem ag Bakaey, ex-ARLA, Gendarme Commandant in Tarkint

-----  
Tuaregs in Gao and Menaka  
-----

7.(C) There are four major Tuareg tribes in the region of Gao and Menaka: the Idnane, the Iwellemmeden, the Kel Essouk and the Chaman-Amas. The Idnane of Gao are distinct from the Idnane of Kidal. The Gao/Menaka Chaman-Amas should not be confused with the Chaman-Amas sub-fraction which are attached to the Kel Affella fraction of the Ifogas tribe in Kidal.

IDNANE leaders from Gao include:

- Ahmed ag Boya, local Chief and Customs officer
- Khat ag Baye, former National Assembly Deputy from Bourem
- Ibrahim ag Mohamed-Assaleh, current National Assembly Deputy from Bourem

IWELLEMMEDEN were, until the colonial era, the dominant Tuareg tribe in Mali. They were supplanted by the Kidal Ifogas while under French rule. Their territory stretches through Mali to Niger and includes several important sub-fractions such as the Kel Denneg and the Kel Ataram. Key

leaders in the Gao and Menaka regions are:

- Bajan ag Hamato, local Chief, National Assembly Deputy from Menaka
- Aroudeyni ag Hamato, Mayor of Anderamboukane
- Guisma ag Hakeyri, ex-ARLA, reportedly a Commandant or Lt. Col. in Malian Army

KEL ESSOUK are often regarded as the religious wing of the Kidal, Gao and Menaka Tuaregs. Their leaders include:

- Zeid ag Anara, local Chief of Tamkoutat near Ansongo
- Alghateq ag Saghdudin, respected marabout in Tamkoutat
- Ibrahim ag Issouf, international consultant based in Bamako

CHAMAN-AMAS - once under the traditional protection of the Iwellemmeden, now largely independent. The Gao/Menaka Chaman-Amas can be divided into several different sub-fractions. During the 1990s rebellion many Chaman-Amas joined the Front for the Liberation of the Azawad (FPLA) led by Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed. Key individuals include:

- Abdelmoument ag Kiyou, local chief, mayor of Tin-Aouker
- Aghatam ag Alhassane, current Minister of Environment
- Sikaye ag Ekawel, development specialist in Gao
- Mossa ag Chekod, businessman in Kidal
- Assalat ag Habbi, ex-FPLA, Lt. Col. in Malian army

based in Menaka

- Intalla ag Assaid, ex-FPLA, Lt. Col in Malian army

based in Sikasso

- Hassanat ag Mehdi (aka "Jimmy), ex-FPLA, Lt. Col

assigned to Gendarmarie in Timbuktu

- Dghaymar ag Alhousseyni, ex-FPLA, Commandant,

Republican Guard in Timbuktu

- Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed, founder of FPLA, now retired near Gao

- Zeidan Sidilamine, ex-FPLA, Malian diplomat assigned to China.

-----  
Tuaregs in Timbuktu  
-----

8.(C) There are two main Tuareg tribes in the region of Timbuktu: the KEL INSTAR and the IWELLEMEDEN. The Kel Instar may also be called Kel Antessar. Iwellemmeden of Timbuktu are generally distinct from the Iwellemmeden of Gao and Menaka. The Kel Instar regard themselves as descended from Arab ancestors and are therefore more closely tied to northern Mali's Arab population. Kel Instar leaders include:

- Mohamed Elmehdi ag Attaher, local Chief

- Mohamed Aly ag Elmokta, Chief in Farach and Essakane

- Ghoumar ag Intaha, President of Timbuktu's regional circle

- Many ag Hamanna, organizer of Timbuktu's annual Festival in the Desert

- Madame Zakietou Walett Halatine, former Minister of Tourism and Arts

- Anasser Lansari, Customs officer assigned to Bamako International Airport

9.(C) The Timbuktu Iwellemeden tribe can be divided in to three fractions roughly located in Dire, Goundam and Gourma. Key individuals include:

- Nokh ag Attcha, Fraction Chief and National Assembly

Deputy from Dire

- Oumeyata ag Chibani, Fraction Chief in Gourma Rharouss

- Atta ag Houd, National Assembly Deputy from Gourma Rharouss.

-----  
Acheriffen, Imghad and the "Jews" of the Sahara  
-----

10.(C) There are a handful of Tuareg tribes best categorized by lineage rather than geographical zone. These include the ACHERIFFEN, the IMGHAD and the D'AOUISSAHAK (who claim descent from Isaac and the ancient Jews of the Sahara, although still devout Muslims). The Acheriffen live in all three of Mali's northern regions. Although they are regarded as vassals attached, at least in Kidal, to the Kel Affella of the Ifogas tribe, the Acheriffen wield a certain amount of religious power and political independence. In Kidal important Acheriffen leaders are:

- Mohamed Ahmed ag Alhassane, Mayor of Djebock

- Hamad Idda ag Mohamed, retired government official living in Djebock

- Mohamed ag Hamad Idda, school director in Djebock

11.(C) In Timbuktu the Acheriffen are often regarded as more numerically important and better politically organized than the Iwellemmeden and Kel Instar. Some Tuaregs refer to the Timbuktu Acheriffen as the armed wing of the Kel Instar. Their leaders include:

- Ahmed Mohamed ag Hamani, former Prime Minister (who claims direct descent from the Prophet)

- Oumarou ag Mohamed Ibrahim, President of the High Council of Territorial Collectivities

- Ahmedou ag Ghabdalla, local Chief in Koigoma

- Mohamed ag Hamed Hama, local Chief in Tin Telout

12.(C) Although the Imghad are also regarded as vassals, those living in the zones of Gossi, Gourma Rhaours, Tessit and Menaka are largely autonomous. During the 1990s

rebellion Imghad leaders like Col. Elhedj Gamou formed an important component of the ARLA rebel movement. Key Imghad leaders are:

- Elhedj Gamou, ex-ARLA, Malian Army Colonel now based in Kidal
- Mohamed Akline, Director of the Malian Agency for Northern Development, based in Gao
- Azaz ag Doudagdag, local leader in Bourem
- Assarid ag Imbarkawen, Vice President of the National Assembly
- Issouf ag Alloudi, member of the High Council of Territorial Collectivities, from Immenass
- Ekhya ag Nokh, Chief in Immenass

13.(C) Many Tuareg believe the D'Aouissahak tribe is descended from Isaac. This is a thesis the D'Aouissahak generally embrace. As a result, they are often regarded as the surviving remnants of ancient Saharan Jews even though today most D'Aouissahak belong to the Quadriyya brotherhood of Sufi Islam. Key D'Aouissahak leaders include:

- Ouness ag Iyoub, businessman based in Tamanrasset, Algeria
- Mohamed ag Adargazoz, Fraction Chief in Talatayt in Menaka
- Baye ag Mohamed, Mayor of Menaka
- Taha ag Mohamed, Customs Officer in Lere

-----  
Applying the Ethnic Lens to Tuareg Rebellions  
-----

14.(C) A quick review of the first two Tuareg rebellions and internal dynamics within the ADC and MNTA reveals that a working knowledge of internal divisions within Malian Tuareg groups is useful - up to a point. Intallah ag Attaher became Amenokal - the traditional leader of Malian Tuaregs - in 1963. His father, also a Kidal Iforas from the Kel Affella fraction, died in 1961 and the Malian government appointed Intallah's older brother, Zied ag Attaher, as Amenokal. In 1963, however, Zied cast his lot with Elladi ag Alla who favored Tuareg independence. The 1963 rebellion, which began in Boughessa, started as a largely Kidal Ifogas and Idnane affair. Members of the Taghat Melet and Imgrad tribes also participated. The rebellion did not enjoy the support of all Ifogas, Idnanes, Taghat Melets or Imgrads, however. Intallah ag Attaher, for instance, opposed his brother's position on Tuareg independence and instead worked with the young Malian government. His decision to collaborate with the Malian government rather than rebel enabled him, with Malian support, to replace his brother as Amenokal in 1963. Other non-ethnic factors, such as the spirit of independence popular in the 1960s, Tuareg ties to French colonial leaders and events in neighboring Algeria therefore provide more powerful explanations of the dynamics behind the first Malian Tuareg rebellion.

15.(C) The initial hostilities of the second Tuareg rebellion, which simmered from 1990 to 1996, were led by Iyad ag Ghali against the Malian military outpost in Menaka in June 1990. In response, and with the help of Algerian mediators, the Malian government and Tuareg leaders signed a peace agreement in January 1991 known as the Tamanrasset Accords. Many of the key tenets of the Tamanrasset Accords ironically reappeared, fifteen years later in the 2006 Algiers Accords. The Tamanrasset agreement failed instantly. The fall of Mali's military dictator Moussa Traore in March 1991 increased levels of uncertainty and helped accelerate the rebellion in the north. In the spring of 1991, as the Tamanrasset agreement was failing and Traore was toppling, internal differences between Iyad ag Ghali's Ifogas dominated

Popular Movement for the Azawad (MPA) and non-Ifogas Tuaregs sparked several spin-off rebel groups. These included the Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of the Azawad (ARLA) led by Rhissa ag Sidi Mohamed, and the Front for the Liberation of the Azawad (FPLA). While the ranks of the MPA were primarily Ifogas, ARLA's membership was primarily Idnane and Taghat Melet. Chaman-Amas from Gao and Menaka

formed the backbone of the FPLA.

16.(C) Although it did not begin as such, the second Tuareg rebellion devolved into multiple rebel movements generally divided along tribe or fractional lines. The existence of these divisions, however, is not sufficient to account for the ferocity of the second rebellion. Massive social dislocations triggered by extensive droughts in the Sahel during the mid 1970s and 80s, and the influx of a new cadre of young Tuaregs fresh from military training in Libya and other points in north Africa were likely more important. Restive youth formed the core of combatants during the second rebellion. Their militarization, revolutionary spirit and desire to dismantle the traditional master-vassal relationships between Tuareg groups that the French and Malian government worked so hard to codify and exploit, ushered in a break with the older generation of Tuareg leaders. One must also not discount the impact of the fall of the Moussa Traore regime as an unforeseen shock that severely altered the balance of power not just in Bamako but in northern Mali as well.

17.(C) Intra-Tuareg tensions also divided the ADC, Mali's next large-scale Tuareg rebel movement (also led by the Ifogas Iyad ag Ghali). In late 2006 the ADC engaged with elements of what is now AQIM in northern Mali. ADC members who participated in the AQIM attacks later reported that ag Ghali had quietly directed fellow Ifogas to pull back just as the ADC prepared to attack AQIM. This forced the ADC's Idnane and Taghat Melet members to face AQIM alone. Afterwards, Ifogas reportedly refused to help fellow Idnanes and Taghat Melets negotiate for the release of prisoners captured by AQIM. One disaffected ADC member, who said he was eventually forced to speak with AQIM leader Bel Moctar directly to win the release of a captured relative, described the ADC as weakened to the point of dissolution following this episode (Ref A).

18.(C) Interestingly, Ibrahim ag Bahanga's MNTA also divides along ethnic lines. Although Bahanga originally attracted some support from younger non-Ifergoumessen Ifogas when he first took Malian soldiers and government officials hostage in 2007, northern contacts indicate that this support evaporated as Bahanga became increasingly isolated. The MNTA now appears to be a largely Ifergoumessen phenomenon managed by northern Mali's three most visible Ifergoumessen: Bahanga, Hassan ag Fagaga and Bahanga's Paris-based father-in-law, Hama ag Sid'Ahmed. Bahanga's decision to attack the Malian military has often been portrayed as an attempt to protect his smuggling fiefdom in Tinzwaten, but in a larger sense, he may have seen it as striking a blow for the commercial interests of his family and for the Ifergoumessen fraction as a whole.

---

#### Restive Youth and Comparisons to 1991

---

19.(C) All of the names listed above are either Tuareg elders or veterans of the second rebellion. No Tuaregs from the generation that came of age following the second rebellion are listed, largely because they have not yet distinguished themselves and are unknown outside of Tuareg circles. Like their predecessors in the 1980s and 90s, many of these younger Tuaregs are unemployed with little to no education, and they likely filled out the fighting ranks of the ADC in 2006. Some are certainly with Bahanga in Tinzwaten. Others are involved in northern Mali's increasingly lucrative business of smuggling arms, cigarettes and drugs. Tuareg leaders are clearly concerned about the direction of Tuareg youth, as evidenced by repeated campaigns by Tuareg elders to "sensitize" youth in Kidal about the dangers of joining up with Bahanga or taking matters into their own hands.

20.(C) Although each of Mali's rebel movements is unique, there are some common themes that may provide clues to potential future developments. One element that links 2008 with the 1990s is restive, unemployed youth. Another is a

stalled peace agreement, negotiated with Algerian support, to resolve rebel attacks mounted by a group led by Iyad ag Ghali against Malian military outposts. Given the similarities between the 1991 Tamanarasset and 2006 Algiers Accords, and the results following the collapse of the former, the failure of Algiers would prove significant. Unfortunately, Mali and Algeria have made little progress toward implementing key aspects of the 2006 agreement. Whether Mali has the political will and financial means to meet the terms of Algiers are open for debate. Bahanga's mini-rebellion in Tinzwaten has further diverted attention away from implementing the Algiers accords and blocked the very development that could forestall future violence.

21.(C) What differentiates contemporary developments from the 1990s is the absence of an unforeseen shock such as the fall of Moussa Traore in 1991. While the democratically elected President Amadou Toumani Toure is much more secure in his position than Moussa Traore ever was, continued foot-dragging over the Algiers Accords could encourage other disaffected northerners to follow Bahanga's example. Another unknown is the line of succession for the current Amenokal, who has been gravely ill since at least 2005. Presumably one of his two sons would take over as Amenokal. Given the continued break down of traditional Tuareg hierarchies, however, an Ifogas from a fraction other than the Kel Affella (i.e ag Ghali, Bahanga or another), could conceivably seek to position himself as the Amenokal's successor.

-----  
Potential Scenarios  
-----

22.(C) One can envision several potential scenarios for 2008 and 2009 based on previous developments in northern Mali. The rosier of these would entail the implementation of at least the key security and socio-economic development aspects of the Algiers Accords coupled with a successful attempt by Tuareg leaders to bring Bahanga and Fagaga back into the fold, thereby returning northern Mali, at least temporarily, to the pre-May 2006 status quo of occasional banditry and rampant illicit trafficking. A continued stand-off between the Malian government and Bahanga, producing no progress on the Algiers accords, could spark an alternative scenario that would lead to increased levels of Tuareg impatience and/or desperation. An attempt by the Malian military to neutralize Bahanga - which is unlikely given the Malians track record in Tinzwaten - could spark a new backlash. Both the second and third scenarios have a high potential for creating new "mini-Bahangas" drawn from the cadre of youth about which we know little to nothing. Tuareg leaders based in northern Mali have repeatedly raised this as a serious concern. A Bahanga copy-cat phenomenon could reproduce the alphabet soup of rebel acronyms that characterized the second rebellion. The appearance of just one or two new mini-Bahangas could spark restless members of other important constituencies in Mali, such as the Arab Berabiche or the Songhrai, to form their own militias as they did in the 1990s.

23.(C) Such a worst-case scenario would clearly have an impact upon AQIM's operations in northern Mali. On the one hand, increased instability could open the door for individual actors to settle old scores with AQIM. Increased lawlessness, however, is more likely to prove a boon to AQIM as well as Tuareg and Berabiche traffickers of arms, drugs and cigarettes.

-----  
Comment: Pressure Points  
-----

24.(C) These scenarios highlight the importance of ensuring at the very least the partial success of the Algiers Accords. Perhaps the most important aspect for the future stability of northern Mali, however, are the cadres of unemployed youth in Kidal and elsewhere. Many of these have formed associations and groups intended to increase local



development, yield basic skills and provide at least a minimal level of income. Without significant exterior support, however, these groups are likely to flounder. When they do, the law-abiding Tuareg youth of today are likely to look toward other, more illicit means of survival. There are some indications that this is occurring already. Heading off this trend by working to ensure that vocational, development and education programs in Kidal and other remote regions of northern Mali is therefore of vital importance.

MCCULLEY